

package now that can benefit seniors. We ought to pass it this year. Sure, we can phase it in, we can build it up, but we want it now. Not like the Budget Committee saying maybe sometime off in the future and giving us absolutely no assurance. That is a mistake. That is flawed policy. That is, I think, a completely inadequate response to the challenges our seniors face.

Next week, when we debate the budget, we will have the opportunity to address this issue. I hope the overwhelming majority of the Members will support an effort that will come from our side, from our leaders to commit this body to take action and take it now. We will have a chance to vote on that. It ought to be something to which every senior citizen in this country pays attention. We will make every effort to fashion a program to provide assistance to our seniors. We are committed to that. We will not be discouraged from that opportunity by these budget recommendations.

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PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I see my friend and colleague, the good Senator from Delaware; but behind him, I see someone for whom I have great admiration, who I join in welcoming back to the United States, a dear friend to me and one of the great world leaders of our time. He is a real voice for peace in the Middle East.

I know I will not trespass on the privileges of the Chair and the ranking minority by mentioning his name, but I want him to know what a pleasure it is to see him here.

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VISIT TO THE SENATE BY THE PRESIDENT OF EGYPT, HOSNI MUBARAK

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, it is my honor to present to the Senate the longtime friend of most Senators, the Honorable President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak.

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RECESS

Mr. HELMS. I ask unanimous consent we stand in recess for 7 minutes.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:52 a.m., recessed until 12 noon; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BURNS).

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for as much time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

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TRANSPORT OF VIOLENT OFFENDERS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I intend to introduce some legislation dealing with violent crime. Before I describe that legislation, I want to speak briefly about another piece of legislation that

I previously introduced called Jeanna's bill, named after an 11-year-old girl from Fargo, ND, who was brutally murdered some while ago. I will speak about that for a moment today because something has happened in the last couple of days of which we ought to be aware.

This is a picture of a man named Kyle Bell. He is a child killer. He molested children. He was sent to prison for 30 years. He was eventually convicted of killing Jeanna North from Fargo, ND, and sent off to prison.

As is too often the case in this country, Kyle Bell was remanded to the custody of a private company to transport him to a prison in some other part of America. That private transport company lost this child killer along the way. He escaped. He was not wearing red clothing or an orange jumpsuit that said: "I am a prisoner." He was in civilian clothes. He was in a van with other prisoners.

One of the guards of the company that was transporting him apparently went in to buy a hamburger or something at a gasoline stop, and the other was asleep in the van. Kyle Bell somehow got his shackles off, climbed up through the roof of the van, and was gone. Tragically, the guards did not notice they had lost a convicted child killer for 9 hours—9 hours.

It concerned me when I saw what had happened to this child killer. This newspaper piece describes what happened and the manhunt around the country for Kyle Bell, a very violent career criminal.

I put together a piece of legislation and was joined by Senator ASHCROFT, Senator LEAHY, and others, to say that if state and local authorities are going to contract with a private company to haul convicted killers and violent offenders, at least the company ought to have to meet some basic standards. That is just common sense to me. It is not now the case.

Any retired law enforcement officer and their brother-in-law and cousin can buy a van, show up at a prison someplace and say: We are hired to haul your prisoners. In fact, it has happened all too often. I will give an example.

A husband and wife team showed up at an Iowa State prison to transport six inmates, five of them convicted murderers. The warden looked at the husband and wife team and said: You have to be kidding me. But the prisoners were given to the husband and wife to transport, and, of course, they escaped. There is story after story of this same circumstance.

The reason I mention it today is earlier this week in Chula Vista, CA, convicted murderer James Prestridge was being transported. He is a person convicted of murder and sentenced to life without parole. He was apparently, according to the Los Angeles Times, being transported from Nevada to North Dakota where he was going to be incarcerated under some kind of prisoner exchange. This is a convicted kill-

er, to be incarcerated for the rest of his life.

Guess what. Mr. James Prestridge, a convicted killer, is no longer in custody. The private company called Extradition International lost him. He escaped. They stopped at a bathroom and he overpowered a guard. He went back to the van, overpowered the other guard, and this guy was gone. He and another violent offender who was with him are on the loose today.

Why is this happening? It does not happen when the U.S. Marshal Service transports violent offenders around the country. They are not losing violent offenders. But private companies have no standards to meet, none at all. Hire a couple of people, rent a van, get your brother-in-law, and you are in business. Some States will turn convicted murderers over to you to be transported to another part of the country.

This makes no sense to me at all. Convicted killers are being transported around our country without the precaution one would expect in the transport of violent offenders. Under these circumstances, the American people are not safe.

Again, the bill I have introduced will require any private company that transports a violent offender to meet basic standards established by the Department of Justice. That bill needs to be heard. We have asked for a hearing before the Judiciary Committee. It has bipartisan support. Congress needs to pass this legislation this year.

The escape in Chula Vista, CA, of a convicted murderer is just one more example of many escapes from private prisoner transport companies. I could stand here for 20 minutes and describe the escapes that have occurred with private companies having access to violent offenders. That is not in the public interest.

In my judgment, violent offenders probably ought to be transported only by law enforcement. But if some States decide they are going to contract with private companies to transport violent offenders around this country, then those companies ought to have to meet basic standards—standards on how you shackle a violent prisoner, standards on what that violent prisoner shall wear when being transported, standards on the experience and the training of the guards and the kind of equipment that is used.

But those standards do not exist now. There is none. That is why people, such as James Prestridge, a convicted murderer, are on the loose. Let's hope no one else loses their life because of this kind of incompetence.

(The remarks of Mr. DORGAN and Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2317 and S. 2318 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I came to the floor to address an issue which is